

Testimony of Michael J. Zacchea, representing the CT Veterans Chamber
on AAC Digitization of Military Records

Tues March 3rd, 2015

CGA Veterans Affairs Committee

We applaud the initiative to convert our state's veterans' military records to digital format through Senate Bill 1016 AAC the Digitization of Military Records. We understand that there are efficiencies of scale to be recognized by this initiative. We believe these efficiencies will show up in the form of improved state's services for veterans.

However, we also recognize the potential pitfalls of digitization of military records. We recommend that extensive steps be taken to protect veterans' military records and personally identifiable information. We are further concerned about the potential for financial exploitation and/or identify theft through illegally obtaining via hacking veterans digitized military records.

We further believe there is a potential national security component to this. We know that ISIS has targeted civilians in the west, and threatened Iraq and Afghanistan veterans online through social media. We are concerned that being able to gain access to digitized military records of post 9/11 veterans and matching them to social media accounts could make our veterans vulnerable to threats of and actual physical violence here in CT.

We recommend that the state's default Personally Identifiable Information policy should be the "floor" for security of our veterans' military records. We would prefer to see bank-level security for digitized military records.